



Pittsburgh Public Schools
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<https://www.pghschools.org>

**The School District of Pittsburgh
(Pittsburgh, PA)**

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL (RFP)

**K-12 WORLD LANGUAGES
CURRICULUM PROGRAM**

Issuance Date: February 19, 2024
Submission Date: March 15, 2024

1. Introduction

This Request for Proposal (RFP) seeks applicants who can provide a comprehensive, research-based, and evidence-based program that will ensure all Pittsburgh Public Schools' teachers and World Languages students in grades Pre-K through 12 will have access to the most effective, culturally inclusive, and highest quality curriculum and instructional resources that promote academic language and growth in speaking, reading, writing, and listening for world language acquisition. The RFP includes detailed requirements for all proposal submissions. The program should also be aligned with evidence-based, researched, and reviewed assessments materials in World Languages that are aligned with the World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages. This RFP seeks assessment providers ("Respondents" or "Offerors") who share a vision for ensuring that all students have access to the highest quality instructional resources aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages *Proficiency Guidelines*, PA State Standards, and evidence-based practices, to ultimately increase student achievement and ensure success in college, careers, and community participation. The program should offer high-quality ACTFL aligned instruction which is grade and age-appropriate to support speaking, reading, writing, and listening skills. The curriculum should provide customizable reports at the district, school, grade level, classroom, and student levels. Assessments must include at least (2) tests per year in K-12 World Languages, with options to assess additionally as needed. PPS is committed to providing a high-quality education for all students therefore, this request for proposal seeks a comprehensive world languages curriculum that meets the needs of all students, including those who receive the following services: English Language Development, Specialized Learning, and Gifted, Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate.

Adopted curriculum materials will be implemented during the 2024-25 school year and all materials will need to be delivered by July 31, 2024.

2. Background

The Pittsburgh Public School District is the largest of 43 school districts in Allegheny County and the second largest in Pennsylvania. The district serves approximately 20,000 students in Pre-Kindergarten through Grade 12, with approximately 60 world languages teachers. Pittsburgh Public Schools has a vision that all students will graduate high school, college, career, and life ready; prepared to complete a two-or four-year college degree or workforce certification.

3. Scope of Services

The requirements outlined in this RFP, although extensive, is not exhaustive and is intended to provide interested Respondents with sufficient basic information to submit proposals meeting minimum requirements but is not intended to limit a proposal's content or exclude any relevant or essential information. Proposals should address at least one or more criteria from the scope of the services requested. In this RFP, Curricular and Instructional Assessment Materials are defined to be the comprehensive curricular and assessment materials needed for students in every classroom, aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages *Proficiency Guidelines* and *World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages*, PA State Standards, evidence-based practices, and adaptable to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and English Language Learners.

RFPs are being sought for the following languages:

- French (Pre-K through 12)
- Mandarin (Pre-K through 12)

- Spanish (Pre-K through 12)
- Portuguese (Pre-K through 12)
- Japanese (Pre-K through 12)
- Italian (Pre-K through 12)
- German (Pre-K through 12)

Proposals must comply with the following selection requirements as written in PPS Board Policy 106, Adoption of Instructional Materials:

- *The primary criteria for the selection of instructional materials are to address the needs of students as described in the Content Standards at each grade level Pre-K through 12. All instructional materials and supplementary materials shall reflect in both narrative and illustration a diverse American society and shall provide equal representation of African American and other cultural and ethnic groups. Adopted instructional materials should avoid stereotyped images based on race and gender. Instructional materials should reflect gender and ethnic minorities participating in leadership roles in all aspects of society. The instructional materials that are ultimately selected in each subject area must be challenging and stretch students to meet high standards.*

4. Curriculum Requirements

4.1 Cultural Relevance

- Instructional materials must be respectful and inclusive of all students' backgrounds, language, culture, ethnicity, race, and gender, with consideration for refugee or immigration experiences; and must pay special attention to cultural implications for learners, while providing appropriate supports for teachers.
- Diverse backgrounds are valued as assets and built upon within the learning.
- Texts acknowledge students' life experiences and social and emotional development.
- Cultural and linguistic diversity is recognized and celebrated within the materials.
- A range of perspectives are presented within the materials and are structured to allow meaningful learning for students.

4.2 Speaking and Listening

- Questions and tasks are grade-level appropriate; they promote and support expansion of students' spoken language proficiency.
- Materials include multiple opportunities for students to listen to authentic models of academic and non-academic target language across genres and registers; they provide insight into disciplinary demands and features across genres, and call attention to cultural differences in thought and expression patterns.
- Materials provide abundant and varied opportunities for teachers and students to listen to rich and compelling texts, interviews, and music.
- Materials provide opportunities for students to develop receptive listening skills, through note-taking and other active listening techniques, and support teachers in assessing comprehension of listening skills.
- Structured speaking activities are explicit and allow numerous student opportunities to discuss in social and academic target language.

- All materials are aligned with ACTFL and Pennsylvania specific standards. Research based best practices for elevating productive and receptive language are embedded within all materials.
- Emphasis should be placed on frequent activities that allow learners to engage in speaking to practice with one another.

4.3 Reading

- Materials include a range of grade-level and age-appropriate instructional texts (e.g., small group, guided) and independent reading texts along a staircase of reading and linguistic complexity.
- Text sets are consistent with grade-appropriate content, themes, and topics, and promote the development of grade-level academic language and content.
- Text sets address and support ACTFL World Language Readiness standards.
- Language progressions are provided in a spiraling and reciprocal manner without sacrificing content or rigor, providing abundant opportunities for students to hear, read, and experience the rhythms and patterns of the language of study.
- Integration of high quality, culturally responsive texts that tap into student assets to deepen understanding and expand knowledge.
- Provides sustained time on the themes, with opportunities (texts, tasks, talk) to reinforce conceptual development and extend the academic language that frames those concepts.
- The materials include diverse representations of culture, language, race, gender, ethnicity, immigration experiences, etc.

4.4 Foundational Skills

- Materials for this component are developmentally, culturally, and linguistically appropriate for a diverse group of learners.
- Materials acknowledge a wide range of literacy development and reading readiness.
- Units should be thematically designed without placing sole emphasis on grammar
 - Cultural information embedded, not separate
 - Vocabulary, expressions organized by themes, not lists of unrelated words
 - All audio, video, cultural materials must be authentic
 - Grammar – useful and practical; not esoteric, rarely used

4.5 Language

- Materials pay explicit attention to, and engage students with, academic language—its features, functions, and grammar—for varied purposes and in varied contexts in service of effective communication and meaningful academic work.
- Materials attend to the language that frames the concepts/ideas; they provide linguistic frames, templates, and other recommendations to scaffold the academic language demands required for extended discourse.
- Materials provide regular opportunities for students to constantly expand their command of academic language as they read across connected texts of various genres, grapple with essential questions, express opinions (with reasoning and rationale), and explore and discuss diverse points of view on important themes.

- Academic language supports provide tiered and accelerated pathways within grade level content and concepts.
- Appropriate scaffolding is provided as needed.

4.6 Writing

- Offers students at all proficiency levels regular opportunities to engage in writing tasks that gradually build the content, language, and skills required to produce increasingly complex, extended writings (argument, informative/expository, narrative).
- Includes routine and systematic practice and opportunities for guided/shared and independent writing events to develop proficiency in structuring cohesive texts—shifting language use based on task, purpose, audience, and text types.
- Includes how the writing process may differ across languages. Explicit, best practice instruction on the process of writing is embedded within all materials.
- The writing process connects and reinforces thematic concepts with appropriate writing skills for a variety of situations.

4.7 Assessments

- Initial diagnostics are incorporated into the materials to measure language acquisition and content development.
- Instructional materials must be aligned to the research in American Counsel on The Teaching of Foreign Languages Proficiency Guidelines and World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages, PA State Standards, evidence-based practices, and adaptable to meet the needs of students with exceptionalities and English Language Learners. Instructional materials must be able to align with the Anticipate-Launch-Explore-Summarize instructional model.
- **World-Readiness Standards for Learning Languages** are an explicit part of instruction, and the assessment demonstrates authentic connections between content standards and proficiency guidelines.
- Instructional materials are designed to build proficiency across a variety of proficiency levels with scaffolds to support student growth from one level to the next.
- Instructional materials should include teacher guidance on how to anticipate students' misconceptions and errors.
- The instructional design of the materials includes a variety of tasks that address all levels of Webb's Depth of Knowledge (DOK).
- Instructional materials must include resources that support tiered instruction in the following areas: intervention, enrichment, and acceleration.
- Integrate explicit instruction and resources to support the teaching and learning of English Language Learners.
- Digital materials include opportunities for teachers to extend learning, to personalize learning for all students, and use adaptive or other technological innovations that allow for progress monitoring and data disaggregation and reporting.
- Include digital and hard-bound print formats
- Rubrics and student work examples across proficiency levels are available.
- Guidance and recommendations for formative assessment of both productive (speaking and writing) and receptive (listening and reading) dimensions of language and literacy, with a goal of informing instruction.

- Varied, scaffolded assessments are a component within the assessment suite of materials.
- Clear, concise reporting of assessment results are available to teachers, students, and families in a variety of print and virtual formats.
- Progress monitoring is detailed and readily present in the materials; all forms of performance data can be easily disaggregated.
- Assessments are developmentally and age appropriate for a variety of language proficiencies.
- Provide students and teachers with a student’s current level of learning in alignment to the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines.
- Assessments must effectively measure incremental student growth through highly accurate scoring of speaking and writing, and scaled scores for listening and reading.
- Aid teachers in better understanding how to support all students in accessing grade-level content and accelerating learning.

4.8 Scaffolding Opportunities and Related Considerations

- Materials incorporate carefully chosen, age-appropriate visuals and graphic supports to activate prior knowledge and scaffold conceptual development. These graphics are used to clarify concepts and relationships within the text that are critical to comprehension.
- Teacher materials incorporate evidence-based approaches, strategies, and resources so that all students may access and attain grade-level standards.
- Teacher resources provide instructional suggestions and recommendations for scaffolding for world language students with diverse needs that incorporate cultural, linguistic, and background experiences students bring to the classroom.
- Teacher resources are comprehensive, robust, and include both print and digital formats. Student textbooks are in both digital and hard copy formats.
- Teacher resources provide examples of student work, highlighting potential areas of linguistic challenge and offering related instructional guidance.
- Materials support teachers in scaffolding up rather than watering down, encouraging students to strive upwards, and ensuring that world language students are instructed with rigorous grade-level content.
- Professional learning and training on these materials can be customized based on the needs of Pittsburgh Public Schools.
- Adaptive technologies exist with the program and consider the variety of learning experiences and previous exposure to technology of families and students.

4.9 Support, Training, and Professional Development

The proposal shall describe the initial training and professional development necessary to beginning implementation of the proposed curriculum. The training plan should include mechanisms to train district teachers and central staff who, in turn, will train school staff and provide support districtwide, including availability of digital professional learning tools.

The professional development plan should be designed to supplement, not supplant, the district’s existing approach to professional development that includes development of school and district expertise and capacity to deliver training districtwide; a focus on equity and cultural proficiency;

school- based embedded support from school and district staff; and development of blended professional learning models that include both face-to-face and virtual learning.

5.0 Proposal Submission and Deadline

All proposals must be submitted electronically to Ameeta Schmitt, at aschmitt2@pghschools.org by **5:00 PM EST on March 15, 2024**, with “World Languages District Assessment” as the subject line. Proposals, including any/all attachments and cover letters, should be submitted as a single PDF document. In addition, digital access to all program materials must be provided. Proposals should be submitted in accordance with the proposal guidelines outlined in this RFP. Pittsburgh Public Schools reserves the right to reject any and all proposals, waive irregularities, and to select the proposal that is determined to be the most advantageous to the school district. Late proposals will not be accepted. Proposals submitted via hard copy or fax will not be accepted.

5.1 Timeline

The Pittsburgh Public Schools is requesting proposals from experienced and qualified firms to provide the services described herein. Selection of the firm will be made based upon proposals submitted. There may also be presentations or interviews which will be conducted remotely). A timetable for the selection process is provided below:

RFP Issued	February 19, 2024
Proposals Due	March 15, 2024
Presentations (If requested)	April 1, 2024 April 15, 2024 April 22, 2024 April 29, 2024
Approval by the Board of Directors	May 6, 2024
Notification of Board Recommendation to Applicant Finalist	By May 23, 2024

Upon the release of this RFP and during the conclusion of the selection process, there shall be no communication between any prospective respondents, their lobbyist(s) or agent(s) and any employee of PPS or its elected Board of Directors, except as provided for in the RFP. Any violation of this provision by any prospective firm and/or its agent shall be grounds for immediate disqualification.

All proposal packages shall be submitted to PPS as follows:

Ameeta Schmitt
 World Languages Supervisor of Curriculum & Instruction
 Greenway Professional Development Center, Room 223c
 1400 Crucible Street
 Pittsburgh, PA 15205
Email: aschmitt2@pghschools.org

5.3 Proposal Introduction

- **Cover Letter:** Provide the name, mailing address, e-mail address, and telephone number of the firm submitting the proposal. The cover letter must be signed by an authorized officer of the organization.
- **Table of Contents:** Clearly identify material contained in the proposal by section and page number.
- **Introduction:** Provide an overview of the company and its programs' effectiveness related to this RFP. Share data-based evidence of high student outcomes from prior and current school districts with similar student demographics as Pittsburgh Public Schools.
- **Program Overview:** Provide an overview of the program and its core components.
- **Independent External Evaluations** – For example EdReports, Evidence for ESSA, or What Works Clearinghouse.
- **Confirmation Certification of EBE Compliance:** Include the EBE participation percentage.

5.4 Evaluation Criteria and Selection Process

- The contract will be awarded to the qualified proposer whose proposal is most advantageous to PPS, based on the evaluation criteria specified below. The overall evaluation feedback from reviewers will guide PPS in making an award decision based on the evaluation criteria.
- PPS reserves the right to request an interview from those companies determined to be in a competitive range and shall use the information derived from these interviews, if any, in its evaluation.
- An evaluation committee, including but not limited to math teachers, principals, chief academic officer, curriculum and instruction staff, assistant superintendents, district-level staff, board members, parents, and community members, will review the proposals. The role of the evaluation committee is to review and assess to what extent submitted proposals meet the evaluation criteria and to make a recommendation. The contract will be awarded to the qualified bidder whose proposal is most advantageous to the district. The evaluation criteria will be considered but will not be the sole factor used to determine the successful bidder.

6.0 Platform and Solution Requirements

- Is your online platform compatible with Clever?
- Does your program have a method of effective use within blended learning to promote independent work and teach direct instruction for large and small groups?
- Does your platform provide real-time data reporting in a dashboard with progress reports at the standard and skill level?
- Can your online program be customized to a variety of student proficiency levels?
- Does your platform have the ability to create learning paths that specifically meet the needs of individual students?

6.1 Product Information

- Software product name
- Complete Product Description

- Current release version and length this product has been on the market. If you are presenting multiple products to meet our business requirements, please specify for each product.
- Total customer sites that are currently using the current version of the product, particularly with a client of our size. Please indicate if any of them are in Pennsylvania.
- Product licensing structure

6.2 Technical Specifications

- Is this a web-based application or would the product need to be installed on premises?
- What browsers are compatible with this product?
- If locally hosted and installed on premises, what are the recommended/required hardware and operating system platforms for deployment.
- If locally hosted, what are the recommended/required Relational Database Management System for deployment.
- If locally hosted, do you recommend a dedicated server to support your application?
- How much bandwidth is required for connectivity?
- Is external access required?
- What ports does the application/website use?
- What are the URLs?
- Is the website HTTPS?
- How frequently are system back-ups created?
- What Operating System does the application use?
- What database does the application use?
- Do we need to purchase end user devices?
- What is the authentication method?
- How are logins managed?
- What, if any, 3rd party vendors or stakeholders involved and what is the expiration?
- Are SSLs involved and what is the expiration?
- Do we need to be aware of any legal or regulatory constraints?
- Is there inherent risk, weakness, or data threats?
- Data protection – sharing data social medial policy.
- Data privacy – what are the rules for personally identifiable information, protected health information, and other private data?
- Encryption rules?
- Do you support Clever as a single sign-on using our Active Directory (Azure)?
- What data is needed from other district systems?
- What data will be provided to other district systems?
- How often does data need to be exchanged?
- How are changes in the data handled?
- Students transferring schools, staffing changes, etc.
- How can we ensure the security of the data during exchange?
- Is there a mitigation process established?
- Is there any existing metadata, definition, or classifications of the data elements?
- Is there an existing data dictionary?
- What is the Right to Know procedure?

6.3 Data Exchange

- Do you support nightly automated loads to and from your system (we have high mobility and systems must reflect at least a day-behind state)? If not, how do you reflect current student assignment and provide teachers/educators with appropriate access to student data.
- Rostering & data import into your system (in order of preference) – provide the import specifications for each method that you support for review by IT team.
 - Do you support ed-fi integration (if yes what version & have you accomplished this with)?
 - Do you have 1EdTech One Roster integration (1.1)?
 - Do you support clever integration?
 - CSV/flat file (provide import specifications)
- Integration with Learning Platforms:
 - Does your product support standardized mechanisms for import into an LMS (for example 1EdTech LTI certification)?
 - Is your product certified for the 1EdTech Learning Tools Interoperability (LTI) standard?
 - Identify locations that you have worked with that have successfully integrated your product with the district's current LMS (currently Schoology)?
- Integration into testing platforms
 - Does your product integrate with assessment platforms?
 - What certifications does your product have for these integrations?
- Exporting data from your system? (Provide data export specifications and data dictionaries for review by IT and DREA team).
- This must be provided in an automated, regular data load to the district that does not require staff time or intervention.
- Ed-fi (what version and what organization have you accomplished this with)
- API (provide documentation to include what endpoints are included in the API)
- FTP (provide export specifications)
- Verify that your nightly export.
 - Is provided in an automated, regular data load to the district that does not require staff time or intervention?
 - Provides individual user level information related to student usage and staff usage explain what elements address the following:
 - Fidelity of usage for students (e.g., daily time logged-in, daily time on task, lessons/segments completed, metrics providing insight into student growth)
 - Staff usage
 - Student and staff audit trails
- Describe your data access/permissions at a minimum address:
 - How you automate the process for access provision
 - How do you establish data access and permissions for teachers and school administrators?
 - How do you establish permissions for district administrators?
 - Provide your auditing capabilities (click paths, change log, etc.)

6.4 Data Security and Destruction

- The district does not allow organizations to maintain copies of student data provided by the district or generated in the system by our students beyond the scope of the contract. What are your procedures to ensure that all student data is destroyed and eliminated from your system?
- What are your policies and processes for the use of individual student data for anything outside

of the delivery of the service provided by your platform?

- Security, privacy, and other agreements must be in addendums to the contracts the contract and agreement shall not reference agreements housed on websites or other changeable mediums– they may not be changed without approval and agreement from the school board.
- The application must include the following:
- The frequency of data exchange must be nightly.
- The data exchange must be automated.
- The program must have data available to support fidelity of usage (minutes logged-in, time on task, lessons/segments completed and student growth)

7. Technology Cost

- What is the entire cost of implementation? You may attach a separate budget sheet if you prefer.
- One-time cost?
- Ongoing yearly cost?
- Customization rate?
- Report’s development costs?
- Is there an additional cost for training?
- Is there an additional cost for support?
- What is the cost associated with integrating other third-party providers?
- If your solution is a cloud-based service, is there a service-level agreement and uptime guarantee? If not, do you provide any discount for the customers?
- Do you provide any contractual flexibility and price discount if either party decides to terminate?

7.1 Overall Program Cost

- Include overall costs for the entire curriculum and materials including but not limited to instructional materials and guides, interventions, assessments, professional development, program setup, delivery service, and related materials.

7.2 ELIGIBLE BUSINESS ENTERPRISE (EBE) PARTICIPATION

- **EBE Goal**

An aspirational Eligible Business Enterprise (EBE) goal of 10%, for business diversity spend, has been assigned for this contract opportunity.

An EBE is a collective of firms that are certified in one or more of the following business diversity categories, registered. in our online EBE directory, and used to track the District’s diversity spend:

- Minority Business Enterprise (MBE)
- Women Business Enterprise (WBE)
- Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE)
- U. S. Small Business Administration 8(A)
- **Proposed Business Diversity Utilization**
 - Is your firm a certified MBE, WBE, DBE or 8(a) firm? If so, please provide proof of current certification from a certifying entity. Self-certification is not accepted.

○ Please also provide detailed information regarding any additional business entity that will assist in completing the scope of work as defined by this solicitation. This should include the:

1. Company Name
2. Company Contact (including title, email, and phone number)
3. Scope of Work
4. Dollar Amount & Percentage of Contract
5. Company Diversity Type (provide proof for each certified firm) oMBE, WBE, DBE, 8(A), Diverse but not certified, N/A

● **Good Faith Effort**

If no portion of this contract will be awarded to a diverse business, specifically \$0 or 0% diversity spend, please provide detailed information addressing your firm's culture for business diversity & inclusion.

1. Diversity Spend: How much money did your company spend with certified MBE, WBE, DBE and/or 8(a) firms last year? What was the diversity percentage based on your total spend?
2. Diversity Count: What is the total number of MBE, WBE, DBE and/or 8(a) firms that your company contracted with last year? Please itemize by each diversity type as well.
3. Membership: Are you a member of any supplier/business diversity organizations? If so, please share the name of the organization and provide details concerning your level of involvement with that organization.

For additional documentation related to EBE policies, the proposer should visit the District's website at: <https://www.pghschools.org/mwbe> or contact Paula B. Castleberry, Minority/Women Business Coordinator at pcastleberry1@pghschools.org.